Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN JO 04740 131921Z

51
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-02

SCS-03 SCA-01 JUSE-00 SEC-01 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8836

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 4740

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV CS
SUBJECT: DIMINISHING PRESS PLAY ON VESCO

1. A WRITTEN RESPONSE BY DEPUTY SIGURD KOBERG
TO "LA REPUBLICA'S" ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JULIO RODRIGUEZ'
CHARGES AND A CRITICJK LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT FROM THE PRD
ASSEMBLY FRACTION COMPRISED THE MAIN PORTION OF DECEMBER 13
PRESS TREATMENT OF THE VESCO AFFAIR. KOBERG'S REPORTED REPLY
STATED THAT, " I HAVE DENIED AND WILL CONTINUE DENYING THE
BASELESS CHARGES..."OF RODRIGO MADRIGAL AND JULIO RODRIGUEZ
AND, "I HAVE NOT NOW AND HAVE NEVER HAD BUSINESS OF ANY
KIND WITH ROBERT VESCO..." TO SUPPORT HIS POINT, KOBERG
INCLUDES A LETTER FROM VESCO, WHICH KOBERG SAYS HE SOLICITED,
STATING THAT HE (VESCO) HAS NEVER HAD ANY BUSINESS WITH KOBERG
AND NEVER ASKED KOBERG TO CONTACT RODRIGUEZ FOR ANY
PURPOSE.

2. THE LONG PARTIDO RENOVACION DEMOCRATICA (PRD)
LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT, SIGNED BY THE THREE PRD DEPUTIES
AND PUBLISHED TODAY (DECEMBER 13) IN BOTH MAJOR PAPERS,
BASICALLY TORE APART THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO THE
PRO-DECENCY COMMITTEE. THE LETTER NOTES THAT THE
VESCO PRESENCE POSES A "FUNDAMENTALLY MORAL" PROBLEM
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PAGE 02 SAN JO 04740 131921Z

AND ASKS ODUBER WHY COSTA RICA SHOULD HAVE TO WAIT

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

UNTI "OTHER STATES" REQUEST HIS EXTRADITION. THE LETTER
NOTES THAT A JUNE 18, 1884 LAW CALLED THE
LAW FOR EXPULSION OF FOREIGNERS AMENDED BY A
NOVEMBER 28, 1936 LAW PROVIES ODUBER WITH THE LEGAL
BASE TO EXPEL VESCO. THE LETTER POINTS OUT THAT MANY
OTHER UNDESIRABLES HAVE BEEN EXPELLED WITHOUT THE
RECOURSE TO THE COURTS THAT THE PRESIDENT SAID IS
NECESSARY IN VESCO'S CASE. WITH REFERENCE TO THE PRESIDENT'S
CLAIM THAT HE WANTED A "FIRM SENTENCE" FROM AHIREIGN COUN-
TRY IN ORDER TO PROCEED AGAINST VESCO IN LOCAL COURTS, THE
PRD DEPUTIES REMIND HIM THAT AS A LAWYER HE KNOWS THAT
THE U.S. JURIDICAL SYSTEM PROHIBITS TRIAL IN ABSENTIA.
THE LETTER ADVISES THE PRESIDENT NOT TO TEST THE PUBLIC'S
LIMITS OF TOLERANCE AND WARNS HIM THAT HE MUST BEAR
THE RESPONSIBILITY, IF THIS LIMIT IS REACHED, FOR ANY
ENSUING VIOLENCE. AFTER PARAPHRASING LINCOLN:
"YOU CAN AVOID SOME DECISION ALL THE TIME, AND
ALL THE DECISIONS SOME OF THE TIME, BUT YOU CANNONT
AVOID ALL THE DECISIONS ALL THE TIME." THE PRD DEPUTIES
PLEDGED THEIR SUPPORT TO THE PRESIDENT ON ISSUES THAT
BENEFIT THE MAJORITY.

3. COMMENT: DESPITE THE POTENTIAL IN THE
KOBERG/RODRIGUEZ SITUATION FOR DURABILITY, WE DO NOT
THINK IT HAS MUCH STAYING POWER IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL
CONTEXT. CHRISTMAS, THE PROBLEM OF ONE'S WORD AGAINST
THE OTHERS, AND THE ASSEMLBLY BEING OUT OF SESSION
ARGUE AGAINST IT. HOWEVER, "LA REPUBLICA" IS ANGRIER
THAN EVER AND FEW PEOPLE SEEM TO BELIEVE KOBERG'S STORY.
THIS ISSUE MAY BE REVIVED IN JANUARY.
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, EXTRADITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANJO04740
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740363-0045
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741236/aaaabevw.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 SEP 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <18 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DIMINISHING PRESS PLAY ON VESCO
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS, (VESCO, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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